

## The Real Issue Surrounding the RU486 Debate

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Letter to the Editor

The provision of the RU486 abortion drug to Australian women should be decided by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Registration of drugs in Australia is done through rigorous evidence-based processes undertaken by the TGA but RU486 is the only drug requiring Ministerial approval for importation and the only drug which is not part of the TGA process.

RU486 provides an option which doctors claim allows earlier abortion, is more natural, avoids surgery or anesthesia, and gives women more control and more privacy (a very much appreciated factor). Currently families have no option but to incur significant costs in travel to major centres, surgery expenses and time away from home. The drug has been used safely for years in many countries and can be administered and monitored by trained GP's.

This drug is also used to treat many cancers, Cushing's Syndrome, endometriosis and glaucoma - surely all Australians deserve these options at stressful and private times of their lives?

The Democrats amendments would mean the provision of RU486 would be decided by those best qualified and competent to assess its safety and efficacy- the TGA and not the personal and moral opinions of a few parliamentarians.

Christina Richards CEO Australian Reproductive Health Alliance Canberra ACT